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Policy enhancing delivery of public services

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzes the implementation of the public services of the practitioners in the government office through the implementation of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, otherwise known as “Act to Improve Efficiency in the Delivery of Government Service to the Public by reducing Bureaucratic Red Tape preventing Graft and Corruption, and Providing Penalties” in government offices and agencies including local government units and government-owned or controlled corporations among national and local agencies, towards efficient model. Furthermore, this utilizes the quantitative research method, specifically a descriptive-survey design on the efficiency of public service delivery model for government offices. The study finds out that the government agencies have been implementing the policies. Therefore, when government officials administer the mandate of law, the government attains the principle of good governance; thus, gaining public trust.

Keywords: *feedback mechanism, implementation of ARTA , public services,*

I. INTRODUCTION

Governments across the world have introduced reforms to social care services to diversify providers; authorities with responsibility for provision of social care towards services from independent for-profit and not for-profit firms (Barton & Chappel, 1985). Public services are defined as those provided by the government for their constituents in two ways: (1) directly, through the public sector, and/or (2) by handing financial aid that can be used to attain these services. Bylaws that apply to various sectors assess public services to check that they are not provided or financed for social or political motives. Thus, the researcher claims that if government officials follow and implement the government policies, public trust to the government itself is regained.

Trust is the subjective awareness that an individual, group, or organization is engaging in

positive action. Trust is able to shape behavior based on its subjective nature, specifically, because it is largely hinged upon the “eyes of the beholder”.

As David (1965) posited, it can be safely said that when citizens trust their government, it means they are confident in the government’s ability to do what is perceived by the citizenry as right and just. Therefore, this kind of trust relies on whether there is an agreement between the people’s interpretations and beliefs of what is right and just, and their perceptions on whether the government is actually able to behave according to these values (Bouckaert & van de Walle, 2003).

Public office is a public trust as embodied in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Bouckaert (2012) said that policy effectiveness depends not solely on whether citizens or organizations trust

the government—as a matter of fact, it goes both ways. The success of policy design is also hinged on whether the government trust its citizens and organizations, and there must be a high amount of shared trust within the members of government itself. Connected to the concept of trust is ethics and accountability, which are both responsibilities of people elected for office in the Philippine government.

Ethics, which deals with moral concepts of right and wrong, is of course a heavy responsibility attached to public officials. In certain cases however, some actions considered insignificant when they are done by regular citizens. However this might not be judged as trivial when they are done by people in public service.

Various factors affect people's trust in their public officials. For a long time, the loss of political support was explained through a real decline of government performance. However, Dalton (2005) posits that the reason might be something else. For example, there has been an identified trend that the more educated a group of citizens are, the higher their expectations for their government. This becomes a problem when expectations rise faster than the government's ability to meet these demands. As a result, there is a marked decrease in people's trust and satisfaction in public officials. Another factor that possibly affects the trust of citizens in government is the nature of their experience in service delivery. Positive experiences raise trust in government of course, but the impact of negative experiences on public trust is much heavier and stronger. According to Kampen, DeWalle and Bouckaert (2006); this is the reason why programs designed to improve trust in government must be targeted towards citizens who are dissatisfied with public services.

According to Putnam (2000), overall social trust can be determined by interpersonal trust among citizens and their civic engagement within their own communities. However, this relationship may also vary, depending upon the context of the situation. As stated by Aghion, Algan and Cahuc (2010), some countries possess low levels of social trust, leading them to rely on government institutions to represent their interest.

Campbell (in Chapman, 2000) declares that government officials who are assigned to complex

departments have accountabilities to three things: (1) their immediate responsibilities; (2) political leaders; and (3) the citizenry in general.

Therefore, the study describes the implementation of the RA 9485 which aims: (1) to promote efficiency and transparency in government with regard to the manner of transacting with the public by requiring each agency to simplify frontline service procedures; (2) to formulate service standards to observe in every transaction; and (3) to make these standards known to the clients/citizens.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The focal point of the study is all about implementation of the public services of the practitioners in the government office in the implementation of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 otherwise known as Act to Improve Efficiency in the Delivery of Government Service to the Public by reducing Bureaucratic Red Tape preventing Graft and Corruption, and Providing Penalties; in a government offices and agencies including local government units and government-owned and controlled corporations. It also seals this commitment between government and citizens by the Citizen's Charter.

Republic Act No. 9485 states in Article II, Section 27 of the 1987 Constitution, "The State shall maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and shall take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption." The Act is a consolidation of Senate Bill No. 2589 and House Bill No. 3776. The bills were passed by the Senate and House of Representatives on February 8, 2007 and February 20, 2007 respectively.

The Act was passed to answer the necessity of establishing a system that will eradicate bureaucratic red tape, prevent graft and corrupt practices and improve the delivery of government frontline service. ARTA 2007, rule IV. Citizen's Charter Section 1. The Citizen's Charter shall include the following information: (a) Vision and mission of the government office or agency; (b) Identification of the frontline services offered, and the clientele; (c) Step-by-step procedure to obtain a particular service; (d) Officer or employee responsible for each step; (e) Maximum time to conclude the process; (f) Document/s

to be presented by the client, with a clear indication of the relevancy of said document/s; (g) Amount of fees, if necessary; (h) Procedure for filing complaints in relation to requests and applications, including the names and contact details of the officials/channels to approach for redress; (i) Allowable period for extension due to unusual circumstances; i.e. unforeseen events beyond the control of concerned government office or agency; and (j) Feedback mechanisms, contact numbers to call and/or persons to approach for recommendations, inquiries, suggestions, as well as complaints. In Section 2, the Citizen's Charter shall be in the form of information billboards which should be posted at the main entrance of offices or at the most conspicuous place, and in the form of published materials written either in English, Filipino, or in the local dialect. In Section 3, The head of office or agency shall constitute a task force to prepare a Citizen's Charter pursuant to the provisions of the Act and these Rules, taking into consideration the stakeholders, users and beneficiaries of the frontline services, and shall conduct consultative formulation and refinement of the provisions of the Charter.

In Section 1 of ARTA 2007, rule VI, titled Accessing Frontline Services states that all offices and agencies are enjoined to undertake on a continuing basis programs to promote customer satisfaction and improve service delivery, and other similar activities for officers and employees in frontline services.

In Section 2, titled the Acceptance and Denial of the Applications and Requests asserts that: (1) all officers or employees shall accept written applications, requests, and/or documents being submitted by clients of the office or agency; (2) the responsible officer or employee shall acknowledge receipt of such application and/or request by writing or printing clearly there on his/her name, the unit where he/she is connected with, and the time and date of receipt; (3) the receiving officer or employee shall perform a preliminary assessment of the request so as to promote a more expeditious action on requests, and shall determine through a cursory evaluation the sufficiency, of submitted requirements for a request or application taking into consideration the determined response time for the transactions; (4) all applications and/

or requests in frontline services shall be acted upon within the period prescribed under the Citizen's Charter, which in no case shall be longer than five (5) working days in the case of simple transactions and ten (10) working days in the case of complex transactions from the time the request or application was received; and (5) depending on the nature of the frontline services requested or the mandate of the office or agency under unusual circumstances, the maximum time prescribed above may be extended. For the extension due to the nature of frontline services, the period for the delivery of frontline services shall be indicated in the Citizen's Charter, which shall not be more than five (5) working days for simple transactions, and not more than ten (10) working days for complex transactions. The office or agency concerned shall notify the requesting party in writing of the reason for the extension and the final date of release of the frontline service/s required. In case the applicant disagrees, he/she may resort to the grievance or complaint mechanisms prescribed in the Citizen's Charter. It is also noted that no application or request shall be returned to the client without appropriate action.

In case an application or request is disapproved the officer or employee who rendered the decision shall send a formal notice to the client within five (5) working days from the receipt of the request and/or application, stating therein the reason for the disapproval including a list of specific requirement/s which the client failed to submit.

Osbourne (2013) presents that for several years, modern public management has based most of its principles from concepts born out of the manufacturing industry. This has led to a huge flaw because essentially, public service management is "service-oriented" while the manufacturing sector is of course product-driven. There is a negative disparity when product-driven management approaches are applied to management of public services.

Serco (2008) states that bringing the right services to people should consider how local authorities are re-designing services to meet their own outcomes, as well as the expectations of their citizens. In addition, his objective is to support local authorities in delivering the right services

through the right channels to reach the people at the right time and at the right cost. If this will be attained, then the local authorities and citizens will be the beneficiaries of an improved quality cost and service. Furthermore, his approach shapes citizens regarding their attitudes, behaviors and preferences towards the government. On the other hand, the local government offices can work out the ideal service for the community through nay channels.

A key requirement if such a channel shift is to be successful includes ensuring that there is consistency in all service delivery, regardless of the strategies which provide consistent service delivery, regardless of the used channel. For example, a process that starts face-to-face may progress through the internet and be completed by phone, all with a consistent high standard of service. The more progress is made in developing and delivering digital services and the associated platforms and technologies, the quicker and easier it will be to implement rounded channel strategies which provide consistent service delivery.

There is no question that we are in an era of massive cultural shift with demographics, social expectations, economics and digital technologies continuing to evolve at astonishing speed. The challenge for local authorities is how to design and deliver services that can evolve at the same pace, meeting both their own outcomes as well as the expectations of their citizens.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilized the quantitative research method, specifically the descriptive-survey design on the efficiency of public service delivery model for government offices. It describes the public practitioners on the implementation of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007.

The study adopted a standardized instrument that was a designed checklist from the Civil Service Commission based on the program of "*pasada*" which means *visit*. The research instrument comprised structured questions that measure how well each institution complies with ARTA 2007, particularly in terms of the presence of a vision-mision, clarity of systems and process, a feedback mechanism, and a complaint desk among others. Ten respondents were randomly

sampled each day for 3 days in each government agency through convenience sampling.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

Agency		Number of Clients Sampled Population			
		Day 1	D ay 2	Day 3	TOTAL
National	Department of Health (DOH)	10	10	10	30
	Department of Tourism (DOT)	10	10	10	30
	Commission on Higher Education (CHED)	10	10	10	30
	Land Transportation Office (LTO)	10	10	10	30
	Department of Social Works and Development (DSWD)	10	10	10	30
Local	Cebu City (CC)	10	10	10	30
	Danao City (DC)	10	10	10	30
	Lapu-lapu City (LC)	10	10	10	30
	Mandaue City(MC)	10	10	10	30
	Talisay City(TC)	10	10	10	30
TOTAL		100	100	100	300

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Mandate of the identified agencies

A mission in any organization serves as a guiding star in decision-making. The recipients of this mission are the shareholders, leaders and employees. To attain the mission, all of them must work hand-in-hand especially in doing assigned tasks and decision-making. In the context of government policies, officials must begin their implementation with a clearly defined mission. With a clear and specific mission and objective, they will have a sense of direction.

Table 2
Mandate of Identified Agencyz

Agency	Mission	Visions
LTO	Rationalize the land transportation services and facilities and to effectively implement the various transportation laws, rules and regulations. It is the responsibility of those involved in the public service to be more vigilant in their part in the over-all development scheme of the national leadership. Hence, promotion of safety and comfort in land travel is a continuing commitment of the LTO. http://www.lto.gov.ph/about-us/transparency-seal/99-about-us/vision-mission-mandate	A frontline government agency showcasing fast and efficient public service for a progressive land transportation sector. http://www.lto.gov.ph/about-us/transparency-seal/99-about-us/vision-mission-mandate
CHED	Given the national government's commitment to transformational leadership that puts education as the central strategy for investing in the Filipino people, reducing poverty, and building national competitiveness and pursuant to Republic Act 7722. http://www.ched.gov.ph/index.php/home/about-ched/vision-mandate/	The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is the key leader of the Philippine Higher Education System effectively working in partnership with other major higher education stakeholders in building the country's human capital and innovation capacity towards the development of a Filipino Nation as a responsible member of the international community. http://www.ched.gov.ph/index.php/home/about-ched/vision-mandate/
DOH	To guarantee equitable, sustainable and quality health for all Filipinos, especially the poor, and to lead the quest for excellence in health.	A global leader for attaining better health outcomes, competitive and responsive health care system, and equitable health financing.
DOT	The Department of Tourism (DOT) shall be the primary government agency charged with the responsibility to encourage, promote, and develop tourism as a major socio-economic activity to generate foreign currency and employment and to spread the benefits of tourism to both the private and public sector. http://asiapacific.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/philippines	The Vision of the Department of Tourism is To become the "MUST EXPERIENCE" destination in Asia. http://asiapacific.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/philippines
DSWD	To develop, implement and coordinate social protection and poverty reduction solutions for and with the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged.	We envision a society where the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged are empowered for an improved quality of life.
Danao City	DANAO CITY: Social Development Sector. To provide adequate health, education and employment, peace and order, housing and basic utilities, social welfare, disaster risk reduction and management activities and sports development services. http://danaocity.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74:vision-mission	DANAO CITY shall be the center for economic growth and catalyst in the mid-northern part of the province. http://danaocity.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74:vision-mission
Mandaue City	Create an environment of sustainable economic growth and a liveable society through responsive governance and multi-sectoral involvement. http://www.mandauecity.gov.ph/	By 2020. Is a primary source of a high quality manufactured consumer products. http://www.mandauecity.gov.ph/
Lapu-lapu City	Develop highly competent, dedicated, disciplined and motivated workforce. http://www.lapulapacity.gov.ph/	A progressive mid-north city through good and apt infrastructure facilities. http://www.lapulapacity.gov.ph/
Talisay City	To promote and sustain environmental balance, economic stability and social equity for the welfare of its empowered citizenry. www.talisaycitycebu.gov.ph/	An environmentally sustainable Aqua City with a happy empowered citizenry working towards a peaceful and progressive community in a diversified economy guided by dynamic and efficient local leadership. www.talisaycitycebu.gov.ph/
Cebu City	To carry on the essence of good governance through the enhanced culture of excellence and transparency. www.cebucity.gov.ph/	Firm, collaborative and supportive leadership. www.cebucity.gov.ph/

Table 2 presents the respective vision and mission of respective agency. Vision is an imagined and anticipated depiction of the organization in the future, which serves as a guide on what the organization eventually wants to become. A mission, on the other hand, sets a directive on what must be accomplished (Abrahams, 1995). It is a specific statement that clearly identifies the organization's purpose, or the reason why it exists in the first place. In other words, it is the main

objective upon which the organization's programs and plans of action must be based on organizations accomplish their mission and pursue their vision. It implies a clear mandate that all government agencies including departments, bureaus, offices, instrumentalities, or government-owned and/or controlled corporations, or local government or district units, shall set up their respective service standards to be known as the Citizen's Charter.

	Agency	\bar{X}	Descriptive Response
National	Department of Health	3.23	I
	Department of Tourism	3.19	I
	Department of Social Welfare and Development	3.09	I
	Commission on Higher Education	3.68	WI
	Land Transportation Office	2.99	I
Local	Cebu City	3.15	I
	Danao City	2.88	I
	Lapu-lapu City	2.98	I
	Mandaue City	2.91	I
	Talisay City	3.03	I
Legend:	Scale	Range	Descriptive Equivalent
	4	3.26-4.00	Well Implemented (WI)
	3	2.51-3.25	Implemented (I)
	2	1.76-2.50	Less Implemented (LI)
	1	1.00-1.75	Not Implemented (NI)

Table 3 shows the compliance as to the implementation of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 into the national agencies, namely: Department of Health, Department of Tourism, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Commission on Higher Education, and Land Transportation Office H. R. 3776 (2007). It means that compliance of Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 was well-disseminated posted (i.e. materials of No Noon Break Policy for the frontline officers; wearing of identification card; Citizen's Charter (containing service commitments on transaction steps, cost, and time) and Public Assistance / Complaints Desk).

Likewise, local agencies namely: Cebu City, Danao City, Lapu-lapu City, Mandaue City and Talisay City gave positive responses with regard to implementation. All government departments

have to be efficient because they have to ensure value for taxpayers' money. Efficiency encompasses the qualitative and value-laden expectations of the society. According to Hondegheem (1998), public accountability rests both on giving an account and on being held to account. The implication of determining the extent of compliance aims to promote transparency in government with regard to the manner of transacting with the public by requiring each agency to simplify frontline service procedures, formulate service standards to observe in every transaction and make known these standards to the client.

V. CONCLUSION

Public services of the practitioners in the government office, in the implementation of Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 among national and

local agencies of Metro Cebu for calendar year 2014 were implemented. Therefore, when the government officials administer the mandate of law, the government has attained the principle of good governance; thus, good public service gains the public trust.

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